

A Chaparral Christmas Gift

By O. Henry



THE original cause of the trouble was about twenty years in growing. At the end of that time it was worth it.

Had you lived anywhere within 50 miles of Sundown ranch you would have heard of it. It possessed a quantity of jet black hair, a pair of extremely frank, deep brown eyes and a laugh that rippled across the prairie like the sound of a hidden brook. The name of it was Rosita McMullen; and she was the daughter of old man McMullen of the Sundown sheep ranch.

There came riding on red roan steeds—or, to be more explicit, on a paint and a sea-bitten sorrel—two wooders. One was Madison Lane and the other was the Frio Kid. But at that time they did not call him the Frio Kid, for he had not earned the honors of special nomenclature. His name was simply Johnny McRoy.

It must not be supposed that these two were the sum of the agreeable Rosita's admirers. The bronchos of a dozen others champed their bits at the long hitching rack of the Sundown ranch. Many were the sheepherders that were cast in those savannas that did not belong to the flocks of Dan McMullen. But of all the cavaliers Madison Lane and Johnny McRoy galloped far ahead, wherefore they are to be chronicled.

Madison Lane, a young cattleman from the Nueces country, won the race. He and Rosita were married one Christmas day. Armed, hilarious, vociferous, magnanimous, the cowmen and the sheepmen, laying aside their hereditary hatred, joined forces to celebrate the occasion.

But while the wedding feast was at its liveliest there descended upon it Johnny McRoy, bitten by jealousy, like one possessed.

"I'll give you a Christmas present," he yelled, shrilly, at the door, with his .45 in his hand. Even then he had some reputation as an offhand shot.

His first bullet cut a neat underbit in Madison Lane's right ear. The barrel of his gun moved an inch. The next shot would have been the bride's, had not Carson, a sheepman, possessed a mind with triggers somewhat well oiled and in repair. The guns of the wedding party had been hung in their belts, upon nails in the wall when they sat at table, as a concession to good taste. But Carson, with great promptness, hurried his plate of roast venison and trifles at McRoy, spilling his aim. The second bullet, then, only shattered the white petals of a Spanish dagger flower suspended two feet above Rosita's head.

The guests spurned their chairs and jumped for their weapons. It was considered an improper act to shoot the bride and groom at a wedding. In about six seconds there were twenty or so bullets due to be whizzing in the direction of Mr. McRoy.

"I'll shoot better next time," yelled Johnny; "and there'll be a next time!" He backed rapidly out the door.

The cattleman swept out upon him, calling for vengeance.

But the sortie failed in its vengeance. McRoy was on his horse and away, shouting back curses and threats as he galloped into the concealing chaparral.

That night was the birthday of the Frio Kid. He became the "bad man" of that portion of the state. The rejection of his suit by Miss McMullen turned him to a dangerous man. When officers went after him for the shooting of Carson, he killed two of them, and entered upon the life of an outlaw. When he was, at last shot and killed by a little one-armed Mexican who was nearly dead himself from fright, the Frio Kid had the deaths of 15 men on his head.

Many tales are told along the border of his impudent courage and daring. But he was not one of the breed of desperadoes who have seasons of generosity and even of softness. They say he never had mercy on the object of his anger. Yet at this and every Christmas it is well to give each one credit, if it can be done, for whatever speck of good he may have possessed. If the Frio Kid ever did a kindly act or felt a thrope of generosity in his heart it was once at such a time and season, and this was the way it happened:

One December in the Frio country rode the Frio Kid and his Satellite and co-shepherd, Mexican Frank. The Kid reined in his mustang, and sat in his saddle, thoughtful and grim, with dangerously narrowing eyes.

"I don't know what I been thinking about, Mex," he remarked in his usual mild drawl, "to have forgot all about a

Christmas present I got to give. I'm going to ride over tomorrow night and shoot Madison Lane in his own house. He got my girl—Rosita would have had me if he hadn't cut into the game. I wonder why I happened to overlook it up to now?"

"Ah, shucks, Kid," said Mexican. "don't talk foolishness. You know you can't get within a mile of Mad Lane's house tomorrow night. I see old man Allen day before yesterday, and he says Mad is going to have Christmas doings at his house. You remember how you shot up the festivities when Mad was married, and about the threats you made? Don't you suppose Mad Lane'll kind of keep his eye open for a certain Mr. Kid? You plumb make me tired, Kid, with such remarks."

"I'm going," repeated the Frio Kid, without heat, "to go to Madison Lane's Christmas doings, and kill him. I ought to have done it a long time ago."

"There's other ways of committing suicide," advised Mexican. "Why don't you go and surrender to the sheriff?"

"I'll get him," said the Kid.

Christmas eve fell as balmy as April. Perhaps there was a hint of far-away frostiness in the air, but it tingled like seltzer, perfumed faintly with late prairie blossoms and the mesquite grass.

When night came the five or six rooms of the ranch house were brightly lit. In one room was a Christmas tree, for the Lanes had a boy of three, and a dozen or more guests were expected from the nearer ranches.

The guests had arrived in buckboards and on horseback, and were making themselves comfortable inside. The evening went along pleasantly. The guests enjoyed and praised Rosita's excellent supper, and afterward the men scattered in groups about the rooms or on the broad "gallery," smoking and chatting.

The Christmas tree, of course, delighted the youngsters, and above all were they pleased when Santa Claus himself in magnificent white beard and furs appeared and began to distribute the toys.

"It's my papa," announced Billy Sampson, aged six.

Berky, a sheepman, an old friend of Lane, stopped Rosita as she was passing by him on the gallery.

"Well, Mrs. Lane," said he, "I suppose by this Christmas you've gotten over being afraid of that fellow Mc-



"Oh, Thank You!"

Roy, haven't you? Madison and I have talked about it, you know."

"Very nearly," said Rosita, smiling. "but I am still nervous sometimes. I shall never forget that awful time when he came so near killing us."

"He's the most cold-hearted villain in the world," said Berky. "The citizens all along the border ought to turn out and hunt him down like a wolf."

"He has committed awful crimes," said Rosita, "but I—don't—know. I think there is a spot of good somewhere in everybody. He was not all ways bad—that I know."

Rosita turned into the hallway between the rooms. Santa Claus, in muffling whiskers and furs, was just coming through.

"I heard what you said through the window, Mrs. Lane," he said. "I was just going down in my pocket for a Christmas present for your husband. But I've left one for you, instead. It's in the room to your right."

"Oh, thank you, kind Santa Claus," said Rosita, brightly.

Rosita went into the room, while Santa Claus stepped into the cooler air of the yard.

She found no one in the room but Madison.

"Where is my present that Santa said he left for me in here?" she asked.

"Haven't seen anything in the way of a present," said her husband, laughing, "unless he could have meant me."

The next day Gabriel Radd, the foreman of the X O ranch, dropped into the post office at Coma Alta.

"Well, the Frio Kid's got his dose of lead at last," he remarked to the postmaster.

"That so? How'd it happen?"

"One of old Sanchez's Mexican sheep herders did it—think of it! The Frio Kid killed by a sheep herder! The Greaser saw him riding along past his camp about twelve o'clock last night, and was so skooked that he up with a Winchester and let him have it. Fullest part of it was that the Kid was dressed all up with white Angora-skin whiskers and a regular Santa Claus rig-out from head to foot. That's of the Frio Kid playing Santa!"

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Christmas Wine and Walnuts

Wonderful Man.
Decem—Ginks had the most wonderful control of his features of any man I ever knew.

Burr—I understand he was a marvel.
Decem—He was. Why, I've even seen that man look pleased when he saw that his wife had bought him for Christmas.

In Advance.
Mrs. Skinfint—Oh, John! Mary, the parlor maid, has just swallowed a quarter! What ever shall we do?

Old Skinfint—Do? Well, I suppose we'd better let her keep it. She'd have expected a Christmas present, anyhow!

Once Enough.
"Christmas comes but once a year," said the cheery citizen.

"No use in its coming twice a year," said the morose person. "Must give a man a chance to save a little money before he can spend it!"

To the Stockholders of Dillon Cotton Mills.

Take notice that a meeting of the stockholders of Dillon Cotton Mills will be held at the office of the company on the 16th day of January, 1912, at eleven o'clock a. m., to consider the advisability of liquidating said corporation and collecting and selling its assets, and to act upon a resolution passed by the Board of Directors at a meeting held on December 7th, 1911, which is as follows:

"That it is the sense of the Directors that this corporation should be liquidated, its property sold, and the balance, if any, distributed among the stockholders in accordance with their respective rights. That a meeting of the stockholders be called at the office of the company at Dillon, S. C., for January 16th, 1912, at eleven o'clock, a. m."

By order of the Board of Directors.

Wm. M. Hamer, Pres. & Treas.
J. W. Lanford, Acting Secretary.

12-14-5t

PROFESSIONAL CARDS

DR. L. R. CRAIG,
Residence Phone 136.
Office Phone 138.
Residence northeast section of town.
Office over Bank of Dillon.

O. M. PAGE, C. E.,
Civil Engineer, Land Surveying and General Engineering, Draughting and Blue Printing.
Office over McLaurin's store.

James R. Coggershall,
Dartington, S. C.
G. R. Pettigrew, Dillon, S. C.
COGGERSHALL & PETTIGREW
Attorneys-at-Law
Office over Bank of Dillon Building.

WALTER P. STACKHOUSE
Attorney at Law
Marion, South Carolina.
Phone No. 9.

LANSNEAU D. LIDE
Attorney at Law
Marion, S. C.
Office in Graham Building.

Knox Livingston, J. B. Gibson,
Bennettsville, S. C. Dillon, S. C.
LIVINGSTON & GIBSON,
Attorneys at Law.
Offices on Railroad Ave., next door to Cotton Mill offices.

JOHNSON & JOHNSON,
C. E's.
Surveying and Engineering, Drafting and Blue Printing.
Represented by
W. F. R. Johnson,
Office over Cotton Mill Office.

Office of
TOWNSEND, ROGERS & McLAURIN,
Attorneys at Law.
Office above McLaurin Drug Store.

JAS. W. JOHNSON
Attorney at Law
Marion, South Carolina.
Practicing in the Courts of Dillon County. 7-21-tf

P. B. Sellers W. C. Moore
SELLERS & MOORE
Attorneys at Law
Practice in State and Federal Courts. Special attention given to collections.
Office over Bank of Dillon.

J. P. LANE,
Attorney-at-Law.
Office over Evans' Pharmacy.

D. O. DuBoise, M. D.,
Little Rock, S. C.
Office at Drug Store.

AT A BARGAIN 2 NICE PLANTATIONS FOR SALE

One six horse farm, one thirteen horse farm, both places being in Sampson County, N. C. 1st. Tract only three mile from Clinton, the county seat, 264 1-4 acres in this tract, with 145, acres cleared, 100 acres more can be easily cleared. Nice new 5 room dwelling barns and stables, only one tenant house. Price thirty three and one third dollars per acre easy terms.

2. Tract, 512 Acres, with 335, acres cleared. Nice new eight room dwelling, fine barns and stalls, six good tenant houses, two to four rooms each, small boiler and engine with grist mill and wood saw attached. This is one of the finest farms in Sampson county, in fine neighborhood and only six miles from county seat. Convenient to good school and church. Price \$30 per acre, terms right

APPLY TO

J. N. O. W. MCKAY, ROWLAND N. C.

A Chance for Owning a Country Home In a Negro Colony

69 acre FARM, well arranged for ample comforts and means for subsistence.
MODERN DWELLING HOUSE

Comprising one living room, one dining room and kitchen, two or more bed chambers with porches, halls and closets, well finished, ventilated and painted, upon a lawn for flowers, shrubs and evergreens. A barn with sheds and etc., and a well of water.

ONE OR MORE CHURCHES AND SCHOOL
For instruction and discipline in the principles of true Christian religion. For intellectual development, moral and civil culture and training for service, business and polite society.

Now is offered for sale a 2,000 acre Colony, divided into 69 farms. The location of these farms is within one-half mile of Earles, a station on the G. and W. R., the soil of which is highly adapted and unrivalled for truck farming production. Write or call upon.

Rev. S. G. Walker, Georgetown, S. C. Salesmen Wanted

To the Stockholders of Hamer Cotton Mill.
Take notice that a meeting of the Hamer Cotton Mill will be held at the office of the company on the 16th day of January, 1912, at ten o'clock a. m., to consider the advisability of liquidating said corporation and collecting and selling its assets, and to act upon a resolution passed by the Board of Directors at a meeting held on December 7th, 1911, which is as follows:

"That it is the sense of the Directors that this corporation should be liquidated, its property sold, and all debts and other obligations paid, and the balance, if any, distributed among the stockholders in accordance with their respective rights. That a meeting of the stockholders be called at the office of the company at Dillon, S. C., for January 16th, 1912, at ten o'clock a. m."

By order of the Board of Directors.

Wm. M. Hamer, Pres. & Treas.
J. W. Lanford, Acting Secretary.

12-14-5t

SO DECEPTIVE.

Many Dillon People Fail to Realize the Seriousness.
Backache is so deceptive. It comes and goes—keeps you guessing. Learn the cause—then cure it. Nine times out of ten it comes from the kidneys. That's why Doan's Kidney Pills are so effective. We present the following case as proof.

Mrs. N. R. Pate, Cook & Marlboro Sts., Bennettsville, S. C., says: "I have no reason to change my opinion of Doan's Kidney Pills that I publicly expressed some years ago. I have found this remedy to be a splendid one for the back and kidneys. I had pains in my back and shoulders and I finally came to the conclusion that the trouble was caused by my kidneys. Doan's Kidney Pills were procured and they not only strengthened my kidneys but relieved all my aches and pains and toned up my system."

For sale by all dealers. Price 50 cents. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, New York, sole agents for the United States. Remember the name—Doan's and take no other.

TO RENT. — 600 ACRES OF ASH pine cotton, tobacco and corn land as there is in South Carolina, to let on shares, or for money or cotton rental, in crops of one to four horses, to suit the renter. Made from one to one and a half bales of cotton to the acre this year. Apply to P. O. Drawer H., Dillon, S. C.

MISSISS AND LADIES FAY ROSE at 11c per pair. E. L. Moore & Co's.

WE RECOMMEND AND SELL The PARK & POLLARD COMPANY DRY-MASH MAKES THEM LAY OR BUST

No poultry farm was ever wrecked from using our high-grade "Lay or Bust" feeds but many have gone "down and out" from using cheap brands. We guarantee every bag—your money back if not all we claim.

Dillon Wholesale Grocery DISTRIBUTORS.

RELIEVE Neuralgia

"I have awful spells of Neuralgia and have doctored a great deal without getting much benefit. For the last two years I have been taking Dr. Miles' Anti-Pain Pills and they always relieve me. I have been so bad with Neuralgia that I sometimes thought I would go crazy. Sometimes it is necessary to take two of them, but never more, and they are sure to relieve me." MRS. FERRIER, 2434 Lynn St., Lincoln, Neb.

Sold by druggists everywhere, who are authorized to return price of first package if they fail to benefit. MILES MEDICAL CO., Elkhart, Ind.

TO RENT. — 600 ACRES OF ASH pine cotton, tobacco and corn land as there is in South Carolina, to let on shares, or for money or cotton rental, in crops of one to four horses, to suit the renter. Made from one to one and a half bales of cotton to the acre this year. Apply to P. O. Drawer H., Dillon, S. C.

MISSISS AND LADIES FAY ROSE at 11c per pair. E. L. Moore & Co's.

BUCKLEN'S IS THE ONLY GENUINE ARNICA SALVE

SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS EVERYWHERE

Catarrh Cannot Be Cured with LOCAL APPLICATIONS, as they cannot reach the seat of the disease. Catarrh is a blood or constitutional disease, and it is only by curing the blood that it can be cured. Doan's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, and acts directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces. Doan's Catarrh Cure is not a quick medicine. It is composed of the best natural ingredients, combined with the best blood purifier, acting directly on the mucous surfaces. The perfect combination of the two ingredients is what produces such wonderful results in curing catarrh. Send for testimonials, free.

F. J. CHESEBROUGH, Proprietor, Toledo, O.

Sold by Druggists everywhere. Take Doan's Family Pills for constipation.

DON'T SUFFER WITH Cuts, Bruises

Strains and Sprains, but apply Doan's Liniment. It is anti-septic and will take the poison and remove it quickly, when all else fails.

Doan's Liniment will save any amount of pain and can be taken internally for Colic, Cramps, etc. Nothing better for Toothache.

Doan's Liniment is the best remedy for Rheumatism, Sciatica, Lame Back, Stiff Joints and Muscles, Sore Throat, Colds, Strains, Sprains, Cuts, Bruises, Colic, Cramps, Neuralgia, Toothache, and all Nerve, Bone and Muscle Aches and Pains. The genuine has Doan's name on every package and looks like this cut, but has RED band on front of package and "Doan's Liniment" always in RED ink. Beware of imitations. Large bottle, 25 cents, and sold by all dealers in medicine. Guaranteed or money refunded by Doan's Remedies Co., Inc., Richmond, Va.

DOAN'S LINIMENT

DOAN'S LINIMENT